



CITY OF CHARLESTON

West Virginia

Council Member – AT LARGE



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Parks & Recreation Committee, Chair
Environment and Recycling Committee

UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE, MEETINGS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC VIA ZOOM

A meeting of the Council Committee on Parks and Recreation will be held on October 29, 2020. The meeting will begin promptly at 5:30 PM.

***Join via internet:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83515991330?pwd=VmVjRDZCZURCb1BCVVQvVWJ0M2w0dz09>

Passcode: 814362

***Join via Telephone: (312) 626-6799 or (929) 436-2866**

Webinar ID: 835 1599 1330

Agenda

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

1. 2-27-2020
2. 9-9-2020

DISCUSSION:

1. Update on dog park
2. Update on rec center WiFi use for students

3. Update on Vandallia Pool Project

4. Chilton Trails

5. Proposed Skatepark

6. Proposed updates to Cato Park

CC/ns

MINUTES

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING

5:30 P. M., FEBRUARY 27, 2020

A/V CONFERENCE ROOM

Chad Robinson, Vice Chairperson, called the meeting of the Charleston City Council Committee on Parks and Recreation to order at 5:30p.m., FEBRUARY 27, 2020, in the Audio/Visual Room in City Hall.

Committee Members Present:

Chad Robinson, Vice Chair
John Kennedy Bailey
Bruce King
Pat Jones
Deanna McKinney

A roll call was taken, and it was determined that a quorum was present.

1. Approval of Previous Minutes

Councilmember Bailey motioned to approve the minutes of the previous meeting on 1-30-2020. Councilmember Jones seconded. There was no objection and the minutes were approved.

2. Discussion – Youth Baseball

Councilmember Robinson stated that the two city leagues were present. They will give the Committee an overview of the league, discuss needs/wants, number of participants, etc.

Tim Sadosky, representing Capital-Midwestern Little League, stated that their boundaries are the Kanawha City, East End and West Side areas. Mark Blankenship, representing Charleston Central Little League stated that their boundaries start in Loudendale to MacCorkle Avenue through Weberwood Elementary to South Hills. He added that each league has “feeder schools,” and they have Weberwood, Overbrook, Holtz and John Adams. Mayor Goodwin asked how many kids were involved. Blankenship replied the number is usually between 250/300 kids, the majority residing in the City. Sadosky replied their numbers were similar. They added that they have been focused on the development of girls softball.

February 27, 2020

Blankenship added that the new Administration has been incredibly responsive to their needs. He added that their biggest struggle has been field space in their district. They use a small field in Oakmont, but it is too small for the older kids. They are also able to use a field in North Charleston. Prior to the current Administration, they raised \$11,000 in grants to improve that field as it is essential to their league. Blankenship added that they share that field with John Adams and G.W. Councilmember Bailey stated that at age thirteen, the size of the field changes. Blankenship offered that they are also exploring opportunities with the Bible Center about building two new fields on their property if they are able to raise the funds. He stressed that two fields are not adequate for their numbers. Sadosky stated that Capital Mid-Western has challenges in scheduling the two middle schools that they accommodate.

Councilmember Robinson asked them to talk about the fields they use. They discussed how the new Administration was very accommodating to their needs, and has fulfilled every request they made including painting dugouts. Blankenship added that it is a lot of little things, and they have had a good line of communication with the Parks and Recreation Director, Rashaun Sayles. Mayor Goodwin inquired about rocks on the fields. Blankenship replied that they resurfaced two fields the year prior with specific baseball dirt. However, once the dirt settled, some of the base level (including rocks) have come to the surface. They have to constantly sweep the fields with a special tool to remove as many rocks as possible. Councilmember Robinson asked if Blankenship had given a list of needs to Sayles, and Blankenship replied that he was working on one. Sadosky added the Bigley field has some safety concerns due to composition, drainage, etc.

Blankenship added that the replacement of the electrical boxes at North Charleston has made a big difference. Councilmember Bailey added that there is a major safety issue with the playground at Bigley that is set directly in the middle of the parking lot. He suggested having fencing around it and replacing it, or moving it to a new location. Bailey added that there is an open alley very close to it through which nearby residents frequently drive. Councilmember Robinson added that the Committee spoke with the Senior League at their last meeting, and that they are going to be getting bids to replace the electrical boxes for the field they use. Councilmember Robinson requested that the leagues send their list of needs to the Parks and Recreation Director to review and prioritize.

Mayor Goodwin added that the Administration recently met with the President of UC to discuss current fundraising efforts to improve the 35th Street and Venable Field. Councilmember Campbell confirmed that their intention is most likely to stay at Watt Powell Park. Councilmember King asked what kind of an agreement the City had for use of their field. Mayor Goodwin said that was something that would need to be discussed, but it is a public field that can be used outside of UC's needs.

Blankenship introduced Ernie Jones, the District Administrator for the leagues. Jones stated that there are 19 leagues over 7 counties in his District that serves approximately 8,00 kids. The biggest league is Hurricane with around 500 kids. Jones added that the

Region will be implementing Fair Play for a sort of free play as well as a Travel Team to be run by the District. Councilmember Bailey confirmed with Jones that the Shawnee Complex was not being used by the leagues. Sayles asked what fees are associated with playing in the league. Blankenship replied that the yearly registration fee to cover the cost of insurance and uniforms is \$85. There are scholarships available for those that cannot afford it. Councilmember Jones stated he was grateful that the league took on the North Charleston area.

3. Department Update

Sayles gave the Committee the Department's activities list for March-May 2020. One of the new events listed is National Dog Park Day at the North Charleston Dog Park with vendors and education.

Assistant Director, Jennifer Holley, added that they have made it a goal to be more inclusive to kids who may be left out of a lot of other groups (sensory sensitivities, disabilities, etc.). Councilmember Robinson added that Councilmember Wesley-Plear told him she could coordinate with the sorority and cheer groups at WV State to help with Friday night events. Councilmember McKinney added that they have helped with a recent event. Sayles added that they have created a new volunteer application form to make the process easier. Councilmember McKinney offered that volunteer consistency should be stressed on the application. A member of the Parks and Recreation Department added that there will also be a Trail Work Day at Cato Park. Councilmember Robinson asked if there was some way for Councilmembers to easily be notified of these types of events so that they could quickly share them to their socials. Sayles added that an updated website would be beneficial.

Councilmember Bailey motioned to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember McKinney seconded.

Meeting adjourned.

MINUTES

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING

5:30 P. M., SEPTEMBER 9, 2020

*IN RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, THE MEETING OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE WAS CONDUCTED ELECTRONICALLY. THE MEETING WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO THE PUBLIC AS A LIVE STREAM VIA ZOOM (PER THE AGENDA).

Caitlin Cook, Chairperson, called the meeting of the Charleston City Council Committee on Parks and Recreation to order at 5:30p.m., SEPTEMBER 9, 2020.

Committee Members Present:

Caitlin Cook, Chair
Chad Robinson, Vice Chair
Jeanine Faegre
Joseph Jenkins
Deanna McKinney

A roll call was taken, and it was determined that a quorum was present.

1. Discussion – Rec Center Update

Councilmember Cook stated that the floor was open to discussing the opening of the Rec Centers. She added that it is important to have wi-fi easily accessible for e-learning. Additionally, it will provide a space for organized play (table tennis, pickle ball, etc.) as well as after school programming. There will be additional safety procedures in place (capacity limitations, masks, temperature checks, etc.). According to the Administration, the roll out will be slow. The new hours for e-learning will be: MLK: 7:30 am – 6:00 pm M-F and Roosevelt: 7:30 am – 4:30 pm M-F. North Charleston will also open for organized play. The Partnership of African American Churches will be at MLK starting October for after-school programs. The Step-by-Step program will be at the Kanawha City Center. Additionally, Roosevelt will be open 12:00 – 2:00 M-F for their Senior Lunch Program.

Mayor Goodwin added that the Department has been flexible and accommodating during the COVID-19 crisis.

Councilmember Faegre confirmed that all the Centers are open for Wi-Fi use.

September 9, 2020

2. Discussion – Playgrounds, Fields Update

Councilmember Cook noted that playgrounds are open throughout the City with extra precautions. The Senior League is using the North Charleston field. The Little League is using the field at West Moreland. Councilmember Robinson added that the President of the league announced that the leagues would be suspended if Kanawha County went into the red zone regarding COVID-19. He added that the fields needed better maintenance from the leagues. Director of Parks and Recreation, Rashaun Sayles, added that she has had good communication with both league presidents and they seem fairly satisfied with the fields. Councilmember Robinson asked for an update concerning the Senior League. Sayles replied that it is going well; they play every Monday and Tuesday. Council Robinson added that the league left the City for the Shawnee Complex in 2018/2019 and are now back.

3. Discussion – Cato Golf Course

Councilmember Cook stated that the Committee had previously discussed the golf course at Cato Park. She summarized that use and numbers were down, and that it had not bringing in the kind of money needed to maintain the area. Councilmember Cook added that there has been up uptick in use at Cato since the pandemic, and recommended that discussions over potential future use be paused for the future.

Mayor Goodwin added golfing sales in general have increased during the pandemic as it is a sport that allows you to socially distance with a group. She asked that the course be allowed another season to see what kind of numbers it generates, as well as to look into what investments would be needed to make Cato a course that golfers would want to play.

Councilmember Jenkins added that he has been told that the golfers like the value of the course.

4. Discussion – East End Dog Park

Councilmember Cook stated that she has received a petition from 36 residents concerning the dog park. She added that the Department had obtained quotes to reinstall the canopy that was damaged and removed during the tornado. The City has secured funding to replace the canopy. The timeline for the replacement is not yet known.

Councilmember Faegre inquired about the possibility of creating a dog park near Cato, and if Community Partnership Grant funds could be used for that. Mayor Goodwin replied that the grant funds have to go to a 501(C)(3). Sayles added that they are in the process of getting estimates for fencing for a dog park in that area as well as possible grant funding.

5. Discussion – Vandalia Pool

Councilmember Cook introduced Libby Booker who represents a civic group that has approached the City about a potential project concerning the Vandalia Pool, which has been closed for years and is not in use. Their proposal is that the pool be filled and turned into a community garden. The only cost to the City appears to be the cost of labor as all materials will be provided.

Booker added that the group is looking for the City to break up and fill in the pool. They would provide the tools, seeds, etc. The goal of the garden will be to help feed the surrounding community and provide gardening skills. The harvest would be distributed through Vandalia Terrace and nearby homes. The space could also be used to tutor children.

Councilmember Jenkins added that the group as well as City Engineer, Chris Knox, has done a great job in putting this together. He added that it is a great opportunity that puts to use a vacant structure. He added that there are a few facilities there (concession area, bathrooms, etc.) that could possibly be incorporated.

Councilmember McKinney expressed interest in implementing this model to other areas of the City.

Councilmember Cook added that the next step would be for the City to conduct a property review. No member of the Committee had an objection. Sayles added that Booker and her group will also be submitting a formal proposal.

6. Director's Briefing

Sayles announced the Department's new Maintenance Manager, Jeremy Mullins. The Department has recently finished the ADA compliant bathrooms at North Charleston, and are now working on the MLK bathrooms. Additionally, they have just purchased the flooring for the project at MLK. The splash pad will be installed at the East End Park hopefully this month.

Councilmember McKinney added that she was aware of several children that did not register for classes, and she applauded the City for having Wi-Fi accessible at the Centers. She added that she wanted to knock on doors to see which families need help, and asked for the Mayor's support. Mayor Goodwin offered to form a plan for which houses to visit, what organizations are providing similar services, etc.

Mayor Goodwin shared with the Committee a draft has been created through grants for an updated Slack Plaza City Center to potentially include a staging area, green space, skating rink, etc. This will provide a vibrant space and a great opportunity for programming.

Councilmember McKinney motioned to adjourn the meeting. Councilmember Faegre seconded.

Meeting adjourned.